

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly amend claims 1, 15, 16 and 18 as shown in the following listing of claims, which replaces all prior listings and versions of claims:

1. (currently amended) An ink jet head comprising: a substrate; a plurality of partition walls disposed on a main surface of the substrate and spaced apart at a preselected interval to form a plurality of channels each for receiving ink; an ink chamber plate connected to the substrate to define with the partition walls an ink chamber for supplying ink to the channels; and a passage forming member connected to the ink chamber plate and having an ink supply passage disposed in communication with the ink chamber for supplying ink contained in an ink storage device to the ink chamber and at least one ink discharge passage for discharging ink from the ink chamber, the ink discharge passage being independent from the ink supply passage so that ink is supplied directly to the ink chamber through the ink supply passage without passing through at least a portion of the ink discharge passage.

2. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 1; wherein the ink discharge passage extends along a longitudinal direction of the ink chamber.

3. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 1; further comprising a check valve disposed in the ink discharge passage to permit the flow of ink from the ink chamber in only one direction.

4. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 1; further comprising sealing means for sealing the ink discharge passage to prevent the discharge of ink from the ink discharge passage.

5. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 1; further comprising a filter disposed between the ink supply passage and the ink chamber for filtering the ink supplied from the ink storage device to the ink chamber.

6. (previously presented) An ink jet recording apparatus comprising: an ink jet head according to claim 1; and absorbing means for absorbing the ink in the ink chamber through the ink discharge passage.

7. (canceled).

8. (canceled).

9. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 4; wherein the sealing means comprises a cap member and an O-ring.

10. (canceled).

11. (canceled).

12. (canceled).

13. (canceled).

14. (canceled).

15. (currently amended) An ink jet head comprising: a substrate having an ink chamber for storing ink and a plurality of channels disposed in communication with the ink chamber for receiving ink from the ink chamber; and a passage forming member connected to the substrate and having an ink supply passage disposed in communication with the ink chamber for supplying ink contained in an ink storage device to the ink chamber and at least one ink discharge passage for discharging ink from the ink chamber, the ink discharge passage being independent from the ink supply passage so that ink is supplied directly to the ink chamber through the ink supply passage without passing through at least a portion of the ink discharge passage.

16. (currently amended) An ink jet head comprising: a substrate having an ink chamber for storing ink and a plurality of channels disposed in communication with the ink chamber for receiving ink from the ink chamber; and a passage

forming member connected to the substrate and having an ink supply passage disposed in communication with the ink chamber for supplying ink contained in an ink storage device to the ink chamber, at least one ink discharge passage for discharging ink from the ink chamber, according to claim 15;
wherein the passage forming member has a main surface through which the ink supply passage and the ink discharge passage extend, and a side surface having a plurality of openings each disposed in communication with a respective one of the ink supply passage and the ink discharge passage; and wherein
passage, the side surface of the passage forming member is being connected to the substrate so that the openings are disposed in communication with the ink chamber.

17. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 15; wherein the at least one ink discharge passage comprises two ink discharge passages.

18. (currently amended) An ink jet head comprising:
a substrate having an ink chamber for storing ink and a plurality of channels disposed in communication with the ink chamber for receiving ink from the ink chamber; and a passage forming member connected to the substrate and having an ink supply passage disposed in communication with the ink chamber for supplying ink contained in an ink storage device to the ink chamber and two ink discharge passages for discharging ink

~~from the ink chamber, according to claim 17; wherein the ink discharge passages are disposed at opposite end portions of the passage forming member corresponding to opposite end portions of the ink chamber.~~

19. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 15; wherein the substrate has a plurality of partition walls spaced apart at a preselected interval to form the channels, each of the partition walls having a pair of deformable side walls; and further comprising a plurality of electrodes each connected to respective ones of the side walls of the partition walls and driven by a voltage signal to deform the side walls to vary the volume in the channels to thereby eject ink from the channels.

20. (previously presented) An ink jet recording head according to claim 19; further comprising a nozzle plate connected to the substrate and having a plurality of nozzle openings each disposed in communication with respective ones of the channels so that when the electrodes are driven by a voltage signal ink is ejected from the channels through the nozzle openings.

21. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 15; further comprising a check valve disposed in the ink discharge passage to permit the flow of ink from the ink chamber in only one direction.

22. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 15; further comprising sealing means for sealing the ink discharge passage to prevent the discharge of ink from the ink discharge passage.

23. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 22; wherein the sealing means comprises a cap member and an O-ring.

24. (previously presented) An ink jet head according to claim 15; further comprising a filter disposed between the ink supply passage and the ink chamber for filtering the ink supplied from the ink storage device to the ink chamber.

25. (previously presented) An ink jet recording apparatus comprising: an ink jet head according to claim 15; and absorbing means for absorbing the ink in the ink chamber through the ink discharge passage.

26. (canceled).

27. (canceled).

28. (canceled).

29. (canceled).

30. (canceled).